

Amendments to the Specification:

The paragraph starting at page 6, line 11, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- In FIG. 5, the outer end of a pipe end portion 22 is connected to a counter flange 20 utilizing solder or is welded thereto. The bead-shaped flange collar 14 of the pipe connecting unit 2 is connected to the counter flange 20 with the aid of a holding flange 18 which engages behind the flange collar 14. The bead-shaped flange collar 14 includes a reinforcement 16 in the form of an ~~annular-shaped~~ annularly-shaped insert which can be elastic as may be required. --

The paragraph starting at page 6, line 28, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- From FIG. 5, it can be seen that the ~~annular-shaped~~ annularly-shaped sealing surfaces 14-I and 14-II are covered with ~~annular-shaped~~ annularly-shaped sealing discs 30-I and 30-II which are vulcanized thereto. --